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KNOW CHICAGO BY HER ACHIEVEMENTS



SOUVENIR PROGRAM



BANQUET

COMMEMORATING THE HISTORIC EVENT OF STRAIGHTENING THE CHICAGO RIVER

WM. HALE THOMPSON
Mayor

RICHARD W. WOLFE
Commissioner of Public Works

GRAND BALLROOM
PALMER HOUSE

6:30 P. M.

THURSDAY
DECEMBER 19, 1929

M E N U

—<>—

CANAPE OF SEA FOOD A LA MARSELLAISE

CELERY

OLIVES

CREAM OF PISTACHIO

CHEESE STICKS

ROAST VERMONT TURKEY PALMER HOUSE

CRANBERRY SAUCE

CANDIED SWEET POTATOES

GARDEN PEAS SAUTE PROVENCALE

ENDIVE SALADE

LORENZO DRESSING

WAFERS

GATOUX RIVER BANKS

SABAYON SAUCE

PETITS FOURS

MIGNARDISES

COFFEE

PROGRAM

—<>—

LORAN D. GAYTON

Toastmaster

SPEAKERS

HON. WILLIAM HALE THOMPSON

Mayor, City of Chicago

HON. RICHARD W. WOLFE

Commissioner of Public Works, City of Chicago

HON. WILLIAM E. HULL, of Peoria

Congressman from Illinois

HON. FRANK REID, of Aurora

Congressman from Illinois

MR. JOHN F. CUSHING

President, Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Co.

COL. E. M. MARKHAM

Division Engineer, Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.

ALDERMAN OSCAR F. NELSON

Vice-President, Chicago Federation of Labor

MR. JOSHUA D'ESPOSITO

Consulting Engineer

MR. HAROLD FOREMAN

Chairman of the Board, Foreman-State Bank

ALDERMAN EDWARD J. KAINDL

Chairman, Committee on Railway Terminals

ALDERMAN JOHN S. CLARK

Chairman, Committee on Finance

MAJOR RUFUS W. PUTNAM

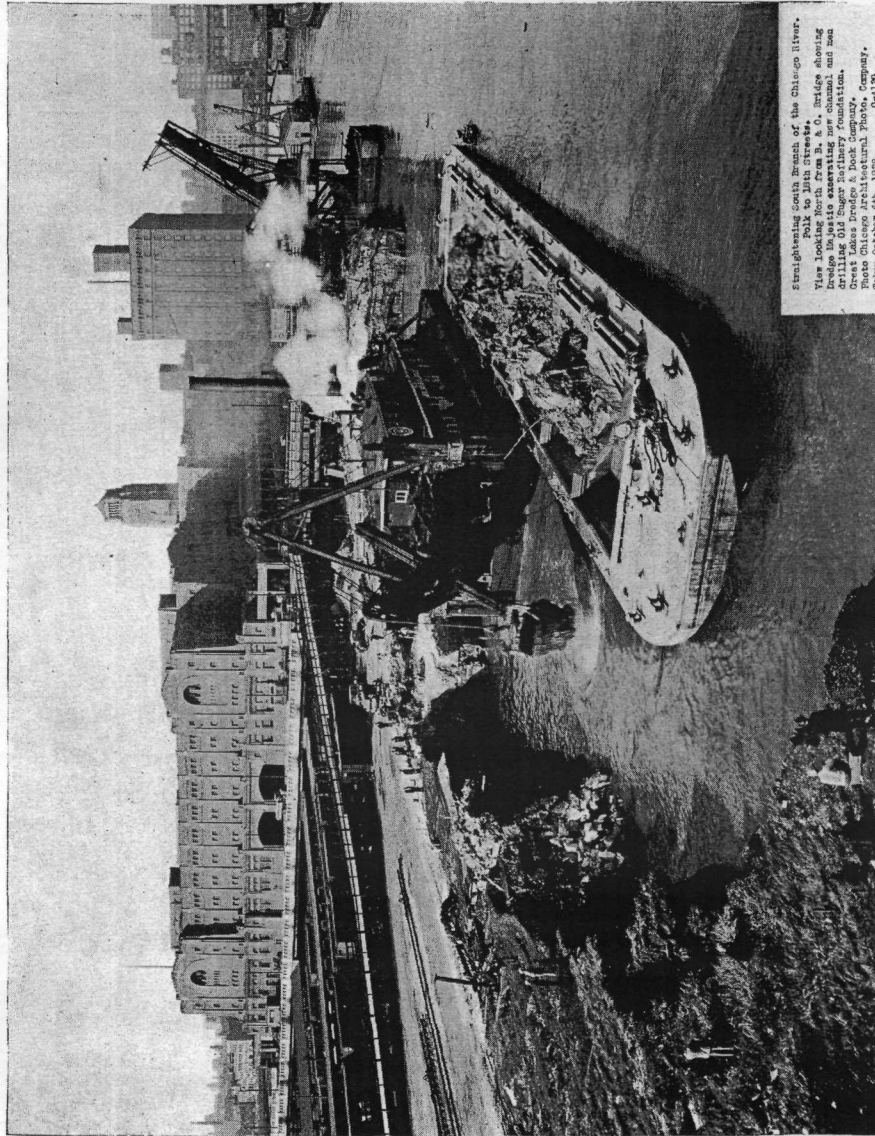
Chicago Association of Commerce

MR. ALBERT SWAYNE

President, Chicago Real Estate Board

MR. ROBERT CLARK DUNCAN

President, Cook County Real Estate Board



Straightening South Branch of the Chicago River.
View Looking North From B. & O. Bridge Showing
Excavation of Old Channel and New
Channel. The Old Channel is Being Filled In
With Gravel and Rock. The New Channel
Is Being Excavated. The Project is Being
Directed by the Chicago River
Improvement Commission.
Photo Chicago Architectural Photo Company,
Chicago, Ill.

River Straightening Project

Beginning of Excavation Sept. 20, 1928

THE STRAIGHTENING OF THE CHICAGO RIVER

Today we join in celebrating the completion of another great forward step in Chicago's progress. From now on traffic on the Chicago river, instead of winding slowly and laboriously down a crooked channel, between Polk and Eighteenth streets, will head directly south with undiminished speed through a new, broad, straight waterway.

The new straight channel of the Chicago River forms an integral part of the Lakes to the Gulf Waterway, and the completion of this channel brings closer the time when Chicago shall have a water outlet to the oceans. The completion of this River Straightening Project is of the greatest importance not only to Chicago but to the entire Mississippi Valley.

The completion of this new channel will make it possible to fill in the old channel and make an area of 126 acres in this district available for air right development, with an estimated valuation of \$35,000,000.00.

Four through streets, north and south, will be opened in this territory, where there now is only one—Clark street. These new through streets are Franklin, Wells, La Salle, and Dearborn.

In addition, Fourteenth street will be opened from Canal to State streets. The opening of these additional streets from the loop to the south will increase the value of property immediately adjacent to the river by hundreds of millions of dollars, and will enhance the value of property as far south as 92nd street, and as far west as the city limits.

Through this improvement the railroads will have an opportunity of constructing terminals more suitable to their needs than those they now have, thus reducing the cost of handling passengers and freight in this district.

For decades the normal expansion to the south of the central business district has been prevented by the barrier of the river bend, and the railroad yards. The completion of this river straightening project will remove the barrier and the central business district will expand to the south, as it already has to the north, and to the west.

Prior to the starting of construction work on the project, it was necessary to make a complete redistribution of the lands affected. This constituted one of the largest and most intricate real estate deals ever attempted, and involved the survey, documentary and legal work necessary to effect the transfer of about 120 parcels of land, of all shapes and sizes, ranging in area from 28 square feet to 280,000 square feet, with a total valuation of about

\$14,000,000. Each of these parcels had to be transferred twice, and many of them were complicated by plural ownership, riparian rights, and other legal phases. All this stupendous undertaking was carried through to a successful conclusion under the personal direction of the Commissioner of Public Works, Richard W. Wolfe.

The first construction work in carrying out the river straightening project was the building of a new bascule bridge at Roosevelt road, over the proposed straightened channel. This bridge has been completed and is now in operation.

In August, 1928, the contract for doing the physical work of digging the new channel, building the necessary dock walls, and filling in the old channel, was awarded to the Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company at their bid price of \$2,773,930.

The work of dredging the new channel was begun on September 20, 1928, at a point 400 feet south of West Polk street.

Since the time of starting, in spite of seemingly unsurmountable obstacles, such as the bitter cold weather of the following winter, the unprecedented high water level of the ensuing spring and summer, and the necessity of maintaining railroad traffic facilities, this work has been driven forward vigorously and kept ahead of the anticipated working schedule.

Although the excavation was at first retarded, awaiting vital changes in the railroad facilities, the new channel was cut through the Roosevelt road bridge early in December, 1928, and a partial cut was advanced southward to 14th street before the severe cold weather forced the cessation of operations, on January 17, 1929.

The work was resumed in the early spring of this year and carried onward to 15th street, where it was again held up by a railroad crossing which could not be disturbed at that time.

Meanwhile work progressed rapidly on the dock structure, which consisted of placing the front piles, sheeting, anchor piles and back-logs.

The then rising water level made it necessary to discontinue this work and find some way of coping with the difficulty, as it was impossible to proceed in the usual manner. After intense study it was found necessary to construct two dams, one near 13th street, and the other north of Roosevelt road, and to build flumes for carrying three large sewers across the new channel to their original connection with the old channel, so as to permit pumping the water out of the new channel, sufficient to allow the work to proceed.

The placing of anchor rods, form work, and the concrete capping then advanced with unprecedented speed and excellence of workmanship, and were completed November 23, 1929.

The completion of the new railroad bridge across the new channel made possible the removal of the temporary railroad crossing, and a narrow neck of land was left in place to serve as a dam for the south end. This last barrier was finally broken through on Wednesday, November 27, 1929, under the personal direction of the Commissioner of Public Works, Richard W. Wolfe.

Then followed the removal of the dams and flumes and the deepening of the channel, where necessary, to provide a passage for vessels. This being accomplished, the channel is today officially opened for navigation.

The filling of the old channel will commence immediately and be continued through the coming winter.

Credit should be given for the hearty co-operation of officials of the various railroads involved, and to the valuable services rendered by the Western Society of Engineers, acting through a committee composed of well known engineers, namely, Major Rufus W. Putnam, chairman, Joshua D'Esposito, A. J. Hammond, L. F. Harza, and W. W. DeBerard. Great credit is also due to the Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company who carried on this work with an enormous construction plant and an efficient organization.

The total cost of the project is approximately \$10,200,000.00, the City's portion of which is approximately \$3,300,000.00.

The cost is being borne by the City of Chicago and the various Railroad Companies as follows: The City 19%, the Pennsylvania Railroad 8%, the Baltimore & Ohio Terminal Railroad 32%, the New York Central Railroad and the Chicago, Rock Island Railroad jointly 31%, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad 9%, and the Western Indiana Railroad 1%, making a total of 100%.

Richard W. Wolfe, Commissioner of Public Works, by his business acumen, has saved the people of Chicago over one million dollars in the cost of carrying out the river straightening project, and the remarkable progress is the result of his unceasing efforts.

The completion of the straightening of the Chicago river is another achievement which shows what can be accomplished by co-operation under the impetus of the indomitable Chicago spirit, "I Will."

